



NEWS RELEASE

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Gang Member Sentenced to Death for Murder, Kidnapping, Other Crimes

A 12th Street gang member convicted of a series of kidnappings and killings in 2009 was sentenced to death today, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Ronald S. Coen imposed the sentence on Robert Louis Caballero, 37. He was the final defendant sentenced in case KA089026.

On Aug. 14, 2014, a jury found true special circumstance allegations that Caballero committed multiple murders, that the murders were committed during the course of a kidnapping and that the defendant was able to carry out the killings by lying in wait. The same jury recommended that Caballero receive the death penalty.

Deputy District Attorneys Sarika Kim and Robert Serna of the Hardcore Gang Division said Caballero was found guilty of three counts of first-degree murder, two counts of kidnapping, one count of assault with a firearm, one count of possession of a firearm by a felon and evading an officer, willful disregard. Furthermore, jurors found true gun and gang allegations.

Caballero's co-defendant, Pete Trejo Jr., 32, was found guilty of first-degree murder and kidnapping. Jurors found true gun and gang allegations, as well as the special circumstance allegations of lying in wait and murder during the course of a kidnapping.

Andrew Valenzuela, 23, also was convicted of first-degree murder and kidnapping. The jury found true gun and gang allegations, and the special circumstance allegation of murder during the course of a kidnapping.

Trejo and Valenzuela were both sentenced in October 2014 to life in state prison without the possibility of parole.

Prosecutors said on Sept. 29, 2009, Caballero killed Armando Vidana, a Cherryville gang member. Vidana was shot eight times and his body was found in the street.

On Nov. 5, 2009, Caballero was at a home with an 18-year-old kidnapped female victim, his cousin David Padilla, and Lorraine Minjarez. During the visit, Caballero became suspicious of Minjarez and believed she was going to tell police that he killed Vidana.

Caballero lured Minjarez to a nearby vehicle driven by his cousin. Seated in the car was the kidnapped female victim. From that location, Caballero, Minjarez and the kidnapped female victim picked up codefendant Trejo.

During the ride, Caballero directed the driver to take them to Mt. Baldy. After they arrived, Caballero then directed Trejo to dig a grave while he strangled Minjarez. Once she was killed, Trejo buried her body and Caballero ordered the kidnapped female victim to hide the evidence.

The next day, suspicious of Padilla's loyalty to him, Caballero lured his cousin to a remote freeway overpass. Once there, he directed codefendant Valenzuela to strangle Padilla while forcing the kidnapped female victim to watch. Valenzuela strangled and beat Padilla to death with rocks, prosecutors said.

Two months later, Caballero, Trejo and Valenzuela were charged in connection with the crimes.

The case was investigated by the Pomona Police Department, Chino Police Department and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

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About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to seeking justice for victims of crime and enhancing public safety. Last year, the [Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#) prosecuted more than 71,000 felony defendants and nearly 112,000 misdemeanor defendants.